



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

The reading of such a work does not engage one with the fascination of a new philosophy or dazzle one with the perception of unsuspected relations; but it engenders in one a kind of skepticism of one's own want of faith. If it does nothing more it may create the suspicion that many things are ignored in ordinary, matter-of-fact, non-religious thinking.

Making use of examples drawn from life, clearing away difficulties by the patient application of a trained power of analysis, frankly and fully recognizing the contributions of other thinkers, Protestant as well as Catholic, the author proceeds serenely on his way to a whole-hearted and well-reasoned assertion of what he regards as the essentials of religious belief.

THE CRISIS OF THE CHURCHES. By Leighton Parks. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

To an onlooker who is a layman the crisis of the churches appears to be due to a want of authority in religious teaching or to a want of respect for such teaching (the same thing, in effect) which is part of a general decline of authority—a decline that appears in politics, in law, in the schools and in the home. There appears to be a rather widespread spiritual stirring; new faiths make converts; yet there seems to be a difficulty in getting people to go to church.

If this condition really exists, it would be wrong, of course, to hold the churches wholly responsible for it. Nevertheless, one feels a little baffled when he finds as one of the first significant statements in Dr. Parks's book, the declaration that "the crisis of the world should lead to a revolution in foreign missions". One is not wholly reassured by the affirmation that the churches and the churches alone can accomplish the work of reconciling Christian internationalism with patriotism. The evangelization of the world, the Christianizing of international relations, the reign of peace, the purification of the family, the upbuilding of Christian character, appear to constitute an ambitious programme. But these are not all. "There is our political life to be purified and our social life to be refined, and, above all, our industrial life to be humanized."

Let us be frank. The realization of such a programme appears too great a task for any single agency to accomplish either by exhortation or by the pointing out of ways and means. What is needed is the evocation of more faith and the development of better character. If it were generally felt that the churches were fully accomplishing this task, there would be no crisis of the churches.

But one must plead guilty to criticizing Dr. Parks's book from the point of view of his title rather than from that of his principal theme. What he has really written is, in fact, mainly a discourse on church unity, and a very sound and sensible discourse it is. Fully informed and quite free from optimistic delusions on this subject, he points out the real weakness of the efforts toward union of the churches that have been made in recent years, while he shows at the same time, and rather strikingly, how much all Christian persons have in

common. "I would suggest," he says significantly, "that, paradoxical as it may seem, the first step toward more effective association will be found not in ignoring the differences of the churches, but, on the contrary, in glorifying them. All the ministries have been effective in their way, and if the author believes the discipline of the Episcopal church best suited to conditions in the world to-day, he makes no exclusive claim for it. It is fellowship rather than formal unity that is needed, and "the underlying cause of the failure of the modern church to fulfil the task and mission committed to it by its Divine Master is due to the fact that fellowship has not been the goal which it has sought to attain". Here certainly Dr. Parks appears to reach an essential truth.